

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 111242

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT LUSAKA 1303 ACTION SECSTATE LONDON NAIROBI
MAY 14, 1977

QTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1303

EXDIS

NAIROBI FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ZA RH US UK

SUBJ: KAUNDA TO PRESIDENT CARTER MESSAGE ON SMITH'S THREAT

REF: LUSAKA 1300

SUMMARY: IN KAUNDA TO PRESIDENT CARTER MESSAGE, KAUNDA EXPRESSES
DEEP RESENTMENT OF ROLE BRITISH PLAYED IN INFORMING HIM OF THREAT
BY SMITH (REFTEL). HE STATES HE WILL HOLD BRITISH RESPONSIBLE
FOR ANY ESCALATION OF THE FIGHTING SINCE BRITAIN IS THE RE-
SPONSIBLE COLONIAL POWER, AND SAYS HE EXPECTS BRITAIN TO STOP
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SMITH'S CONTEMPLATED ACTION, KAUNDA SAYS HE RESERVES THE RIGHT
TO CALL ON ANYONE FOR AID IN THE EVENT ZAMBIA IS ATTACKED.
IN ORAL PRESENTATION MADE WHEN HANDING OVER LETTER CHONA SAID:
SMITH IS FEELING THREATENED BY ZAMBIA'S INTENT TO PROSECUTE
OIL COMPANIES FOR SANCTION BUSTING; THIS HAS LED TO HIS THREAT
AGAINST ZAMBIA. TIME IS NOW TO TELL OIL COMPANIES TO CUT OFF
SUPPLIES TO RHODESIA. IF WAR ESCALATES, THERE WILL BE NO NEED

FOR THE GRAHAM CONSULTATIVE GROUP; BRITAIN HAS PLAYED A STRANGE
ROLE IN ACTING AS INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN SMITH AND ZAMBIA. REASON
PRESIDENT KAUNDA CANCELLED HIS TRIP TO THE U.S. WAS BECAUSE OF
HIS AWARENESS THAT TENSION WAS BUILDING ON BORDER BETWEEN
ZAMBIA AND RHODESIA. WE HAVE SHARED GIST OF PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S
MESSAGE WITH BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION. BRITISH ARE ALERT TO
POSSIBILITY THAT FLAP OVER SMITH-OWEN TO KAUNDA WARNING COULD
JEOPARDIZE WORK OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP. END SUMMARY

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT KAUNDA TO
PRESIDENT CARTER DATED MAY 14 AND GIVEN TO ME AT 1630 LOCAL,
MAY 14 BY PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT MARK CHONA:

QUOTE

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

ON THURSDAY, MAY 12, 1977, THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER IN
LUSAKA TRANSMITTED A MESSAGE FROM THE BRITISH FOREIGN AND
COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY, DR. DAVID OWEN, DATED MAY 11, 1977,
ADDRESSED TO ME. THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THAT MESSAGE:

"I HAVE HAD A MESSAGE FROM IAN SMITH. HE SAYS HE HAS RELIABLE
INFORMATION THAT ZAPU ARE PLANNING A MAJOR OFFENSIVE AGAINST
RHODESIA FROM ZAMBIA. HE WARNS THAT HE MIGHT HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE
BUT TO MOUNT PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKES AGAINST ZAPU BASES IN YOUR
TERRITORY. HE ASKS ME TO USE MY GOOD OFFICES WITH YOU TO
PREVENT AN ESCALATION OF THE FIGHTING WHICH, HE BELIEVES,
COULD JEOPARDISE OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.
I HAVE REPLIED TO MR. SMITH, SIMPLY SAYING THAT I HAVE DRAWN
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HIS REMARKS TO YOUR ATTENTION AND THAT, IN MY VIEW, ESCALATION
OF THE FIGHTING, BY EITHER SIDE, COULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES."

YOU WILL NO DOUBT UNDERSTAND THE GRAVITY OF THE MESSAGE. THE
PARADOX IS THAT IT IS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT HAS TRANSMITTED
TO ME IAN SMITH'S THREAT TO ATTACK THE ZAMBIAN TERRITORY.
HMG HAS LIMITED THEIR RESPONSE TO DRAWING MY GOVERNMENT'S
ATTENTION AND HAVE MERELY REPORTED TO SMITH THEIR ACTION. I
CANNOT HIDE MY UTTER DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE BRITISH DEMONSTRATION
OF THEIR ABDICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY OVER THEIR COLONY.
RHODESIA IS A BRITISH COLONY FOR WHICH THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE.
WE, THEREFORE, HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO HOLD THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT
RESPONSIBLE FOR SMITH'S ATTACKS AGAINST ZAMBIA. WE WILL HOLD
THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ESCALATION OF THE WAR
WHICH WILL FOLLOW SUCH ATTACKS. WE WILL HOLD THE BRITISH GOVERN-
MENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CONSEQUENCES WHICH WILL FOLLOW SUCH
AN ESCALATION. WE HAVE A DUTY TO DEFEND OUR TERRITORY. WE
RESERVE OUR RIGHT TO CALL UPON ANY FRIENDLY NATION IN THE WORLD
TO COME TO OUR AID TO REPEL THE ACTS OF AGGRESSION WHICH

APPEAR TO HAVE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. WE EXPECT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO STOP IAN SMITH'S CONTEMPLATED ACTION BECAUSE IT IS A DIRECT THREAT NOT ONLY TO ZAMBIA BUT TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

WE ALSO KNOW FROM OUR SOURCES IN SOUTH AFRICA THAT EVERY MAJOR RHODESIAN OFFENSIVE AGAINST MOZAMBIQUE WAS JOINTLY PLANNED BY RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA AND FINANCED BY THE LATTER. WE NOW KNOW THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS INVOLVED IN THE CURRENT MILITARY PLANS AGAINST ZAMBIA.

WE KNOW NOTHING OF THE PLANNED SO-CALLED OFFENSIVE BY ZAPU AGAINST REBEL RHODESIA. WE BELIEVE THAT IAN SMITH MERELY WANTS TO CREATE AN EXCUSE FOR ATTACKING ZAMBIA. WE WILL RESIST SUCH ATTACK.

FOR MANY YEARS WE HAVE SHOWN OUR TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING
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IN THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL END TO THE WAR IN ZIMBABWE. IAN SMITH WITH THE APPARENT ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE BRITISH NOW WANTS TO DESTROY OUR COMMITMENT TO PEACE. IT IS WITH PROFOUND REGRET THAT WE CAN NO LONGER CONTINUE TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF BUILDING AND MAINTAINING PEACE ALONE.

I URGE YOU TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, SOUTH AFRICA AND IAN SMITH NOT TO ENCOURAGE A SITUATION WHOSE CONSEQUENCES WILL BE FELT FAR BEYOND THIS REGION.

YOURS SINCERELY,
KENNETH KAUNDA
END QTE

AFTERPRESENTING THE LETTER CHONA SAID HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY PRESIDENT KAUNDA TO MAKE FURTHER POINTS ORALLY.

KAUNDA WANTED PRESIDENT CARTER TO KNOW THAT ZAMBIA IS INTENT ON INVESTIGATING ALL POSSIBLE MEANS FOR PROSECUTING OIL COMPANIES WHICH HAVE VIOLATED OIL SANCTIONS FOR YEARS BY SUPPLYING OIL TO RHODESIA. SMITH IS AWARE OF ZAMBIA'S INTENT AND HE FEELS AFRAID AND THREATENED. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT HE IS MENACING ZAMBIA. GIVEN THIS ILLUSTRATION OF SMITH'S SENSITIVITY TO THE QUESTION OF A POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN HIS OIL SUPPLIES, "ISN'T THE TIME NOW FOR OIL COMPANIES, INCLUDING AMERICAN OIL COMPANIES, TO BE TOLD TO STOP SUPPLYING "SMITH."

PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD KNOW THAT PRESIDENT KAUNDA TAKES MOST SERIOUSLY SMITH'S THREAT. IF ZAMBIA IS ATTACKED, IT WILL BE WAR, AND ZAMBIA WILL FEEL FREE TO CALL ON ANYONE FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEFEATING THE ENEMY. UNLIKE MOZAMBIQUE ZAMIBA IS PREPARED TO

DEFEND ITS TERRITORY, AND IS PREPARED TO CALL FOR OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE IN SO DOING. IF THERE SHOULD BE AN EXCALATION PROVOKED BY SMITH, THE NEED FOR A GRAHAM CONSULTATIVE GROUP WOULD NO LONGER EXIST.

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PRESIDENT KAUNDA WAS UTTERLY DISAPPOINTED AT THE INTERMEDIARY ROLE BRITAIN HAD PLAYED IN RELAYING THE MESSAGE FROM SMITH. AS THE COLONIAL POWER, BRITAIN SHOULD HAVE TOLD SMITH THAT, IF HE MADE ANY MOVE AGAINST ZAMBIA, HE WOULD BE PUNISHED. PRESIDENT KAUNDA HAD SENT A MESSAGE TO PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN TO DETERMINE IF OWEN HAD ACTED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S KNOWLEDGE IN TRANSMITTING THE SMITH WARNING. ONCE THIS WAS ASCERTAINED, PRESIDENT KAUNDA WOULD MAKE HIS FINAL DECISION ON HOW TO TREAT THIS "STRANGE" INTERVENTION BY THE BRITISH.

PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD BE INFORMED THAT THE REAL REASON, PRESIDENT KAUNDA HAD CANCELLED HIS VISIT TO THE U.S. WAS BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT TENSIONS WERE BUILDING ON THE ZAMBIA/RHODESIA BORDER. THERE HAD BEEN INCREASED INCIDENTS OF RHODESIAN AIRCRAFT VIOLATING ZAMBIAN AIR SPACE AND THE NUMBER OF SHOOTING INCIDENTS HAD GROWN.

I SHARED WITH THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION THE GIST OF KAUNDA'S LETTER. THEY FEEL THAT THE OWEN MESSAGE WARNING OF SMITH'S THREAT HAS RAISED GRAVE PROBLEMS FOR THE EARLY SUCCESS OF THE GRAHAM MISSION. THEY HAVE TRANSMITTED KAUNDA'S REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION AS TO WHETHER PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN HAD APPROVED THE OWEN MESSAGE TO LONDON AND ARE AWAITING A REPLY. THEY DO NOT KNOW JUST HOW FAR KAUNDA'S EMOTIONS, OR CHONA'S ADVICE, WILL LEAD HIM IN PLACING STRAINS ON ZAMBIAN/UK RELATIONS, BUT KAUNDA'S COMBATATIVE MOOD MAKES THEM THINK HE IS READY TO GO PRETTY FAR.

COMMENT: IF WE ARE TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON CALMING KAUNDA DOWN, WHICH IS OBVIOUSLY OF HIGHEST IMPORTANCE IN GETTING THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP OFF TO A GOOD START, WE SHOULD GET A REPLY TO HIS LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER TO HIM SOONEST. OWEN'S LETTER HAS SUCCEEDED IN BRINGING TO THE FORE ALL OF THE RESENTMENT KAUNDA HAS BUILT UP AGAINST THE BRITISH OVER THE YEARS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, AS REPORTED REFTTEL, PRESIDENT KAUNDA INTENDS TO ADDRESS THE NATION ON THE SMITH THREAT MONDAY, MAY 16.

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